

Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Emergency Assistance Program (EA)

Fiscal Year 2014, Second Quarterly Report

Department of Housing and Community Development

January 27, 2014



Department of Housing and Community Development
EA Legislative Report
Quarter 2, SFY 2014

During Quarter 2, 3,109 families applied for EA, an 18 percent decrease from the previous quarter, and a 23 percent increase compared to the second quarter of FY13. Consistent with demand for EA as reflected in the number of families applying, 1,472 families were placed in EA shelters or hotels/motels during Quarter 2, 17 percent fewer than the previous quarter but 34% more than Quarter 2 of FY13. In addition, 100 EA eligible families were diverted from shelter with HomeBASE Household Assistance, a flexible benefit of up to \$4,000 annually to help them retain their current housing or support them in seeking alternative housing.

The Boston regional office continued to serve as the entry point for the greatest number of families placed in shelter or motels, 458 families in Quarter 2, accounting for 31 percent of all placements, followed by the Springfield office at 14 percent and the Brockton office at 10 percent.

Most families entering EA shelter/motels (54%) were eligible due to a health and safety risk, while eviction was the reason for homelessness for 13 percent of families and domestic violence for another 11 percent. Of those families experiencing a health and safety risk, two-thirds were in irregular housing situations. 20 percent were living in situations unfit for human habitation, and another 14 percent were experiencing health and safety problems related to their hosts' behavior (violent conduct, substance abuse, or mental illness).

During Quarter 2, HomeBASE Rental Assistance (HBRA) expired for approximately 2,033 families (38% of families whose HBRA benefits expire during FY14). 169 of these families were placed in EA shelter or hotels/motels when their benefit timed out, although many choose not to enter EA after receiving their placement. 97 families (5% of the families whose HBRA benefit expired during Quarter 2) received a shelter or hotel/motel placement and entered the system. Families ending HBRA at the end of the quarter may have applied for and entered EA in subsequent months. At time of reporting, only 10 percent of families whose HBRA benefit expired during FY14 had entered an EA shelter or hotel/motel.

To accommodate demand for EA beyond DHCD's contracted shelter units, the Department continued to rely on hotels/motels. During Quarter 2, there was a daily average caseload of 2,104 families in hotels/motels compared to 1,609 in Quarter 1, a 31 percent increase. The EA hotel/motel caseload reached its highest level on December 4th at 2,175 families, but decreased to 2,098 families by the end of the month, a 4% decrease. Due to the continuing demand for EA, DHCD began contracting for additional shelter units. During Quarter 2, DHCD added 295 new shelter units in addition to 44 that went on-line during Quarter 1 and the 2,023 contracted shelter units at the start of the fiscal year.

During Quarter 2, 1,368 families exited the EA system. 143 (10%) of these families left with an MRVP voucher. 422 families (31% of Quarter 2 exits) left the EA shelter or hotel/motels with HomeBASE Household Assistance.¹

¹ The numbers receiving MRVPs and HomeBASE Household Assistance are not mutually exclusive. Families receiving an MRVP may also exit with HomeBASE Household Assistance.

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EA Applications and Entries

All Applications	SFY 2014 Quarter 2	Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD
			Oct	Nov	Dec	
Families Applying to EA	3,109	3,788	1,268	1,036	951	6,579
Families Entering Shelter and Hotel/Motels or Diverted with HomeBASE Household Assistance	1,572	1,863	603	506	463	3,435
Families Entering Shelter & Hotels/Motels	1,472	1,775	571	469	432	3,247
% Entering Shelter or Hotels/Motels	94%	95%	95%	93%	93%	95%
Families Diverted with HomeBASE HA	100	88	32	37	31	188
% Entering HomeBASE	6%	5%	5%	7%	7%	5%

Note: Families applying for EA are an unduplicated count. Since families may apply multiple times, the sum of monthly data do not equal the quarterly total.

Sources: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data and Tracker.

EA Health & Safety Assessments

	SFY 2014 Quarter 2	Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD
			Oct	Nov	Dec	
H&S Assessments Conducted by DCF	548	790	194	176	178	1,338
Families Determined at Risk	456	656	163	143	150	1,112
% Referrals at Risk	83%	83%	84%	81%	84%	83%
Shelter Diversions	92	134	31	33	28	226
% Referrals Diverted	17%	17%	16%	19%	16%	17%

Source: DCF Monthly Homeless H&S Assessment Reports.

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EA Shelter Entries by Region

Regional Office	SFY 2014 Quarter 2		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		Oct	Nov	Dec	# Families	% of Total
All Offices	1,472	100%	1,775	571	469	432	3,247	100%
Boston	458	31%	425	177	137	144	883	27%
Brockton	146	10%	237	55	49	42	383	12%
Fall River	33	2%	27	10	11	12	60	2%
Fitchburg	8	1%	4	2	2	4	12	<1%
Framingham	12	1%	20	8	3	1	32	1%
Greenfield	14	1%	22	5	6	3	36	1%
Holyoke	87	6%	90	34	35	18	177	5%
Hyannis	16	1%	18	3	8	5	34	1%
Lawrence	52	4%	114	23	11	18	166	5%
Lowell	60	4%	100	25	21	14	160	5%
Malden	73	5%	114	29	28	16	187	6%
New Bedford	29	2%	22	8	7	14	51	2%
North Shore (Salem)	94	6%	95	36	25	33	189	6%
Pittsfield/North Adams	4	<1%	3	2	2	0	7	<1%
Plymouth	12	1%	16	7	3	2	28	1%
Revere/Chelsea	75	5%	119	28	23	24	194	6%
Southbridge	4	<1%	8	1	1	2	12	<1%
Springfield	202	14%	265	79	67	56	467	14%
Taunton	41	3%	40	16	12	13	81	2%
Worcester	52	4%	36	23	18	11	88	3%

Source: DHCD Placement Unit Daily Entry Data.

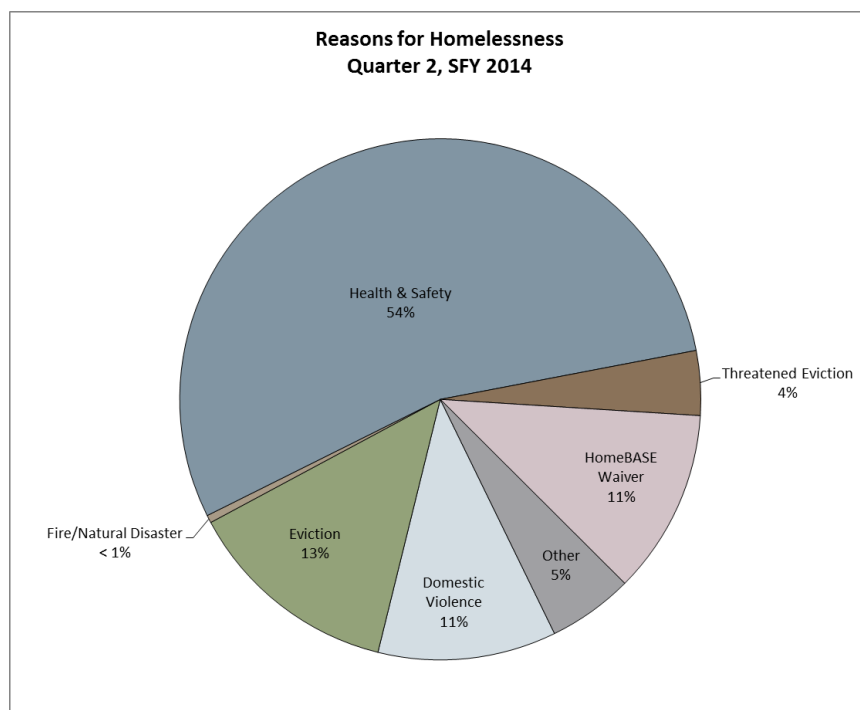
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**Reason for Homelessness,
Families Entering Shelter/Motels**

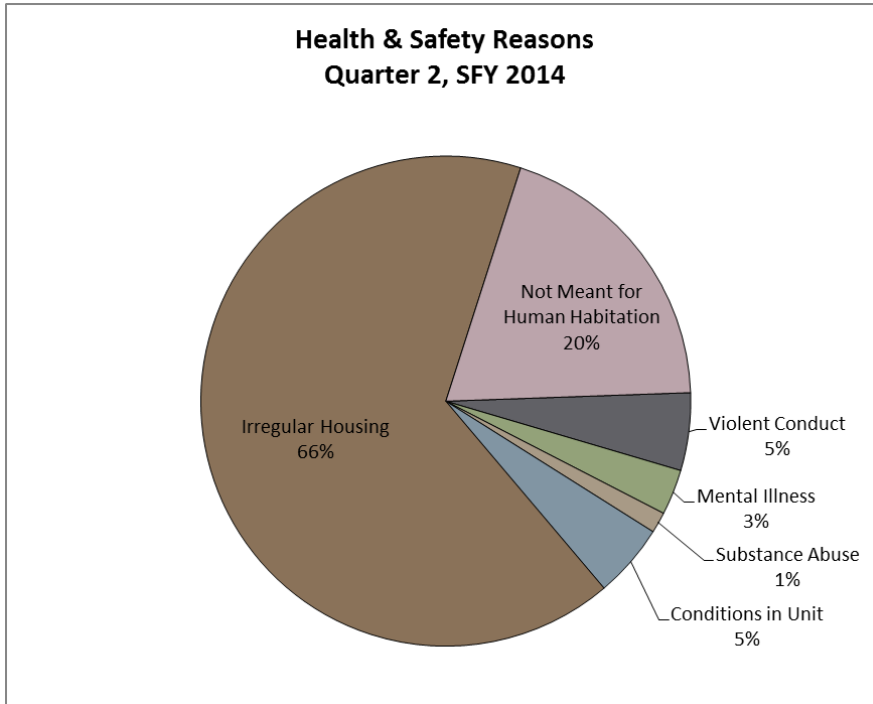
Reason for Homelessness	SFY 2014 Quarter 2		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		Oct	Nov	Dec	# Families	% of Total
Total	1,472	100%	1,775	571	469	432	3,247	100%
Domestic Violence	163	11%	210	64	51	48	373	11%
Eviction	196	13%	233	74	67	55	429	13%
Fire/Natural Disaster	7	<1%	18	2	2	3	25	1%
Health & Safety	800	54%	921	284	276	240	1,721	53%
Threatened Eviction	59	4%	85	28	12	19	144	4%
HomeBASE Waiver	169	11%	241	92	36	41	410	13%
Other	78	5%	67	27	25	26	145	4%

Note: Data includes families placed in an EA shelters or hotels/motels who declined their placements.

Source: DHCD Placement Unit data.



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Shelter Exits

	SFY 2014 Quarter 2		Previous Quarter	SFY 2014			SFY 2014 YTD	
	# Families	% of Total		Oct	Nov	Dec	# Families	% of Total
Total Shelter/Motel Exits	1,368	100%	1,106	434	438	496	2,474	100%
Exiting with HomeBASE HA	422	31%	330	133	160	129	752	30%
Exiting with MRVPs	143	10%	125	41	36	66	268	11%

Note: Some families exiting with an MRVP also exited with HomeBASE Household Assistance.

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EA Shelter and Hotel/Motel Caseload

Daily Utilization by Shelter Type	Quarter 2 SFY 2014	
	# of Families	% of Total Daily Caseload
Shelter (Congregate and Scattered)	2,115	53%
Motel	1,852	47%
All Families	3,967	100%
Caseload Difference from Previous Quarter	336	
% Change from Previous Quarter	9%	

Note: Number of families indicates the average daily number during the quarter.

**Length of Stay and Cost of Families Exiting EA
During Quarter 2**

	Min.	Max.	Average
Days in EA Shelter or Hotels/Motels	0	1,484	225
Cost Per Episode	\$108	\$160,272	\$24,300

Notes:

Cost per episode assumes an average daily rate of \$108 (the weighted average of the shelter and hotel/motel rates). The average daily rate includes additional costs incurred through housing stabilization and services coordination provided to families in EA. It is possible to have a length of stay of zero days with associated costs if a family is approved for EA and placed in a shelter or hotel/motel but abandons their placement.

HomeBASE Caseload

Type of Assistance	Number of Families
Rental Assistance	1,772
Household Assistance	4,132

Note: Data indicate families active in the HomeBASE program on December 31, 2013.